Shalom Center offers plenty for residents

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Parks & Recreation
SHALOM CENTER

By Dave Delaney
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If you're looking for a place to hold a family reunion, club meeting or similar function, consider Shalom Center.

For generations a summer camp for underprivileged youngsters, the camp located at Whitcomb Heights near West Terre Haute is under new ownership and is opening its facilities to the public.

"It's beautiful out here and most Terre Haute area people don't know about us," said Karen Kaperak, who manages the center with her husband, Joe. The South Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church bought the 50-acre center several years ago and rents it out to groups of all types.

"It's not just for church groups," continued Kaperak. There are many openings for both weekends and mid-week at the center, which is available for rental year-round, she said.

The facility features a swimming pool, dormitories for both males and females, a large knotty pine dining room with fireplace which doubles as a meeting room and outside playground equipment for youngsters. A softball diamond is under construction and will be ready when the weather warms. There's a net for volleyball, horseshoe pits, lawn bowling and other recreational articles.

"Our place is so much cheaper for things like family reunions," said Kaperak. "You can spend a week here and the place is yours for the same price you'd pay for a day or two at a motel."

There are areas for camping and miles of hiking trails through the woods. Prices vary depending on the size of the group renting the center and what they want.

"We have one group of ladies from Clinton who come down for the day to picnic and use the pool," she said. Each woman pays the center $2. Groups using the dorms overnight have full use of a large kitchen complete with pots, pans, silverware, glass and plates for a fee of around $8 per person per 24-hour period. Campers must provide their own bedding, but the center provides wood for campfires.

Another example Kaperak gave of financing was that a group up to 40 people would probably pay something like $25 to hold a picnic at the center.

Shalom Center can be rented by the hour, day, weekend or week. "Hamilton Center is renting the place during the summer," she said. Both the West Terre Haute police and fire department generally rent the place for various functions each year.

"People can also use our place as a camping site or just some place to get away from it all," continued Kaperak, pointing out bookings this year are about double what they were last year.

Kaperak said the name Shalom Center was picked in a contest with southern Indiana United Methodist churches casting votes.

REFERENCE
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Vigo County Public Library
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